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DOH-PINELLAS REPORTS LOCALLY-ACQUIRED MEASLES IN AN UNVACCINATED CHILD



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The Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County (DOH-Pinellas) is investigating a case of measles in an unvaccinated child. The infection was acquired locally and the source has not been identified. DOH-Pinellas is working with community health care partners to identify and notify persons who were potentially exposed to measles. The department encourages all residents and visitors who have not been immunized to get vaccinated.

Measles is a virus that is easily spread by air droplets when infected persons breathe, cough, or sneeze. The first symptoms are a high fever that may spike to 105°F, cough, runny nose and red, watery eyes. These symptoms are followed by a blotchy rash that spreads from the head to the feet. Measles is a potentially severe disease, especially young children and persons with compromised immune systems. Complications can include pneumonia, encephalitis and death.

The best way to protect yourself and those you love against measles is to get vaccinated. Two doses of measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine are recommended routinely for children, with the first dose at age 12 through 15 months and the second dose at ages four through six years. Adults should be vaccinated with at least one dose of MMR vaccine, with a second dose recommended for those at higher risk such as international travelers and health care workers.

"We are continuing to investigate, but we would like families to know that their children could be exposed to diseases like measles anywhere and—unless they're protected with vaccination—they are risking potentially serious health effects for their child," said DOH-Pinellas Director Dr. Ulyee Choe, an infectious disease specialist. "We encourage all parents to fully vaccinate their children to protect them from diseases like measles."

Unvaccinated individuals who are exposed to measles may be excluded for up to 21 days from public places, such as school and work, where they could infect others.

Persons with symptoms of measles should be evaluated by their health care provider. Health care providers are asked to immediately report suspected cases of measles to DOH-Pinellas.

For further information about measles in Florida, please visit www.floridahealth.gov/measles.

For information about DOH-Pinellas, go to www.PinellasHealth.com or follow us on Twitter [@HealthyPinellas](https://twitter.com/HealthyPinellas).

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